

A
LETTER
TO A
GENTLEMAN

In the
Commission of the Peace,
Exciting him to the
PERFORMANCE of his PART
IN
Executing the late Act
Against
Profane Cursing and Swearing.

L O N D O N.

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A
 LETTER
 TO A
 Gentleman, &c.

Dear Sir,

YOUR last Favours added to all the former were so greatly Obliging, That I could not let slip this Opportunity of expressing the grateful Sence I have of such *Generous* Kindness: 'Tis a humility more than common that makes you so Condescending to *Inferiors*, and a Goodness which sets you off more than all your *Birth* and *Fortune*, that you study the ways of Pleasing the Lovers of Ingenuity and Piety with some Agreeable Entertainments. And by your Admiring and Praising such an excellent *Design*, as you were pleased to Communicate last time I had occasion to be your Guest; you much Commend your own acute Judgment, and your good Relish

of that which the *Illiterate* Scorn, and the *Prophane* Abhor. May you go on Sir, (so befitting your *Quality*) to delight your self in such worthy Studies ; for which all good men will join with me to Honour and applaud you. It would be great pity Sir, if one accomplished with such Gifts of Nature, improved with *Polite* Learning, and Sweetness of Manners, and who approve your self so *Orthodox*, and well dispos'd for that which is Right and Good, As also so much in the Interest of the present Government, (if you) should not be found *Consistent* with your self, and your Goodness all of a *Peice*. But as much as I was pleas'd with all your other Declarations and carriage, in which you were kind to impart your self so *Free* and open : yet I must take the boldness to tell you Sir, That I was not a little *Surpris'd* at one thing which dropt from your Lips, and sent me away not so well satisfied as I could have wish'd, out of your Company. And it was this, That you who so readily concur'd with me, in Condemning the Folly and Wickedness of *Common Swearing*, and its Mischeivousness to the *Publick*, as well as to a mans own *Soul* (So that you have made it unnecessary for me to take any pains to *Convince* you of the Sin and Evil) should, for all this not shew your self very well

well pleased, but rather somewhat aggriev'd at the late *Act*, for the more effectual suppressing of *Prophane Cursing and Swearing*.

An *Act* which so many Wise and Good Men thought highly *Needful* to be promoted, and not a little rejoyce to see it accomplish'd. That the notorious Enemies of God and Godliness should *Droop* and be *Sullen* upon it, who can wonder? For this is but to appear in their own *Likeness*. But it seems to me strangely unaccountable, Sir, That any Ingenious Good Man should not be Glad with all his heart, to hear of any *Remedy* devis'd to help us against such a Crying and Prevailing Sin, such a Senseless and Odious Wickedness. If I understood you aright Sir, and if you spoke not what you did only by way of *Objection*, as Tempting me to express my Sense of the matter; I cannot Imagin what should be the Cause of your *Backwardness* to comply with such an excellent Means, at least, to Restrain, if not quite to Cure, this *Rampant Ungodliness*: Unless it be some of the following *Considerations*, which (now you have left me to Conjecture) I shall name, and (in the familiar way you have embolden'd me to speak) give you my thoughts of, *viz.* your Despair of doing any Good. Your Tenderneſs

of *Disobliging* your Friends. Your *Unwillingness* to Spoil Company. Or your Fear of Creating your self Trouble; or of getting *Ill-will*: or to be censured for *Singular*, *Praise*, or a *Busse-Body*.

First then, Sir, Are you so loath to concern your self in pursuance of the Design of this *Act*, because Hopeless of doing any Good, to Regulate a Disorder so *Inveterate*, and generally Prevalent; 'till 'tis grown even the *Fashion* of the Age? Do you think it Vain therefore to strive against the Stream, and as good do nothing as to no purpose: when the thing is past Cure, and so sets all Remedies at *Defiance*; that no *Healing* can be expected? I heartily Bewail it, Sir, That there should be so much *Occasion* for this Objection. Though my *Calling* and *Course* of Life (I bless God), sets me much out of the way of the *Dammes*, and mad *Hectors* of our Times; and so I may hear but the *Parsons* part of their *Blasphemies*: yet in every corner as I pass I am often Witness to so much as makes me fear the Corruption to be *Epidemical*, and the World so *Incurably* Evil, That I may as soon make account to stop *Severn* with my hand, as to put a *Non-ultra* to the Course of its Wickedness. However most Passengers through this World, seem confident

fidest they are bound for the Joys of the next; We may guess too well by the *Throng*, that the greater number take the *Broadway*: And where Offenders are so exceeding Numerous, Rulers sometimes have thought it Advisable to make their *Multitudes* an Argument of their *Indemnity*, and let them Escape, as too many to be Punished. 'Tis a *Maxime* indeed, *Nemo tenetur ad Impossibile*, you are not bound Sir, to Reform all the World.

Yet where you cannot do every thing, as you *would*, that will not excuse you from doing what you *can*. If the *Whole* is not to be sav'd, yet 'tis a Praise worthy Attempt to do somewhat *towards* it, and save as much as may be, yea though you can Effect nothing to your Mind, yet 'tis a great deal but to shew your *Good-will* Sir, and so to Deliver your own *Soul*. And you have not Labour'd in vain, nor Spent your strength for nought, though *Israel* be not Gather'd: as long as your Judgment is with the *Lord*, and your Work with your *God*. (*Isa. 49, 4, 5.*) you shall be never the less Glorious in his Eyes, for your very *Desire* to bring him Glory. And he will Reward you, not according to the *Success*, but according to your *Aims* and *Endeavours* to promote his Honor and

A 4

Pleasure

Pleasure. And oh how much more might be done, Sir, than is done, this way? The *Lazy* and *ill-affected* cry, They shall make *Nothing* of it: When indeed they have no *Mind* to it. But would every one thus lay out the Power and Interest which they have, soon might we see a mighty *Change* in the World much for the better. And such as have been *Outragious*, would at least be more *Mannerly*, with their Wickedness. Would you Sir, but heartily Espouse the Cause of God's Honor, and shew your self *Vigorous* for it, as far as your *Influence* extends, O what a Blessing would it be to your Family, and your Neighbourhood? And how much Good might you do Sir, in being, but (as you ought to be) a *Terror* to the *Evil-doers*? For, alas, they have nothing to say for themselves, but what one would be ashamed to hear. There is nothing but a silly and ungodly *Custom* on their side: when *Reason* and *Conscience* and all the *Laws* of God and Man are clear against them. Methinks then it may be to some purpose to take up the *Cudgels*, and contend with 'em. And where you cannot *Gain* 'em, yet 'tis worth while to *Confound* 'em. That they may not be so *Impudent*, when discover'd to be quite in the *Wrong*: Nor in such danger to *Infect* and Poyson others, when under *Correction* and Publick *Disgrace* them-

themselves. 'Tis from *Impunity* that they take so much Boldness, and therefore Punishment must needs be some Restraint. But if you hear them Swear or Curse, and *Connive* or Laugh at 'em, you thus bid 'em Sin on, and make them *Proud* of the Office to give you such Diversion, and make your *Worship* so Merry. Hence the hardened Wretches are ready to infer, not only, that there's small *Hurt* in it, but that 'tis their Honor and Interest, and they do *Well* to be so *Wicked*. And thus, I am sure, you may do Infinite *Mischief*, Sir, when in your self you betray any thing like a *Prophane* humour, and a wretched *Contempt* of Gods Honor: which *Mischief* certainly, Sir, you may and ought to prevent. And even in doing so much, you will do us no small Good. And did all such as you, who set the *Fashion* to so many others, but Frown upon the Swearing Crew, and shew your Abhorrence of that which our *Senators* justly call the *Detestable Sin*; This must needs Contribute a great deal to the Beating of it down. Would you never *Scowl* and look Awry at Sobriety and the Fear of God, to dash it out of *Countenance*; but approve your self in good *Earnest* for it, and make them know, you would never endure to hear it Scorn'd and *Ridicul'd*; Thus your *Example* would help

to bring it into greater Repate, and oblige them to keep a better *Decorum*.

And further yet might you go, Sir, by your *Authority*, in doing according to the Obligation now lying upon you, to put the *Act* against Swearing in *Execution*: and let none Escape that make themselves Obnoxious in your *Presence*, and to your Notice. And so far should the *Commonness* of the Evil be from Discouraging any to Oppose it, That it should but the more Awaken every good Christians Zeal and Mettle to do what ever in them lyes, to give some Check to the Spreading *Plague*: That, at least a *Remnant* may be Heal'd and Sav'd: and not *all* Ruin'd and Lost.

The great *Council* of this Land, you see, Sir, did not, from the *Inefficacy* of former Means, take Excuse to *Supersede* any further Attempts, but rather a *Provocation*, to try somewhat afresh, and to *Enact* a Stricter *Law*, enforced with bigger *Penalties*: Which their Wisdom judges may help to *Suppress* the Wickedness. Now that it is to be bought at a Dearer rate than ever; And they have so *Stigmatized* the Swearers, and made them go in *Gyves* and *Fetters*. And God knows what may be done by this means well pursued: If *Witnesses* and *Magistrates*
be

be not shamefully wanting in their Office
O be not hopeless then Sir, nor Heartless
to do your *Part*: And leave the *Issue* to his
Blessing, who uses to smile upon all such
Pious Designs, how many soever in this
Wicked World look awry at 'em.

Secondly. Are you Tender of *Disobli-*
ging your Friends, and therefore shy to
meddle, lest you should be thought *Un-*
kind? Indeed, Sir, Friendship is a *Sacred*
Bond, which every Good Man will be
afraid to *violate*. But if the doing of
Justice, and discharging a necessary Duty,
must make a Breach of Friendship; I much
question whether we ought to be very
Scrupulous in keeping up such a Friendship.
And I cannot think we are Oblig'd
to please any *Friends*, at the Hazard of
God's Displeasure. But must rather be in
Care to *Honor* our God, than to *Humour*
our Friend. You know, Sir, what an
Honourable and *Excellent* Person says in
the case,

*My Bosom Friend, if he Blaspheme thy Name
I will tear thence his Love and Fame.* Herb.

When such as bear the *Character* of our
Friends will be so *Unkind* to their own
Souls, to List themselves among *Gods En-*
mies

emies (and who they are you are told, *Psal. 139. 20. Thy Enemies take thy Name in Vain*) The Example of that Man after *Gods Heart* will warrant you to count them your *Enemies*. Ver. 22, *i. e.* As far as they are against the *Lord*, to be utterly against them in *so ill a way*: and to shew more *Faithfulness* to him, than to *Comply* with such as *Provoke* and *dare* him, even to his *Face*. But that which looks so *Disobliging* to them, may yet verily, be one of the greatest *Courtesies* you could do 'em: For Good Sir, what true *Friendship* have you for that man whose reall *Happiness* you desire not? And how can you *Love* your *Friend*, and not care for his *Soul* (which is his very *Self*) though it be *Lost* for ever? Is that *Hearty Love*, To *Hate your Brother in your Heart*? And if you *Suffer* the *Sin* which you see upon him, what better is it? *Lev. 19. 17.* Is any one a better *Friend*, nearer or *Dearer* to you than your *Lord* and your *God*? Must you give up his *Honour*, to *Gratifie* anothers wicked *Pleasure*? And are you so *Great* with them, that you will *Sacrifice* your *Religion* and *Gods Glory* to 'em? Or are you so *Bound* to them that you must *Despise* him, and *Pawn* your *Soul* to do them a *Kindness*? But I pray you, Sir, can you indeed think it a *Kindness* to *Embolden* them in the way to *Hell*?
And

And that they are so much *Bebolden* to you, for excusing them from a little *Penalty*, which might help to deliver them from everlasting *Misery*? Not that I think such a pitiful Sum can be the *Price* of their Redemption: But as a *Warning-piece*, it may be a means to make them more *Cautious* in keeping off from the *Wickedness*, which bodes no better than their *Damnation*.

If *Loose Lives* make the *Fast Friends*, soon and sad will be the *End* of all that Friendship; when as the *Brotherhood* in *Iniquity* are only Combined in a *Confederacy* against the Heavenly Majesty: and such *Holding* together will at last come to downright *Curfing* one another. We abhor the very mention of a mans selling his Soul to the *Devil*: But, Good Sir, what Softer Name does that *League* and Friendship deserve, when a man must give up the *Kings* Laws, and *Gods* Glory, and his own *Conscience*, and Everlasting *Salvation*; all to spare and favour a mad Hellish Swearer? If you take some of that *Demonination* for your Friends, O be not then too Cruel to them, Sir, as to let them run on in their cursed *Enmity* to God, and lie unmolested in the Paws of the *Devil*. Tho they might peradventure give you more *Thanks* to let 'em alone as they are:

You

You are not to seek their Thanks, Sir, so much as their *Salvation*. And could you but any way, be Instrumental to *Break* them of the Damning Wickedness, you would Oblige them *Eternally*. Tho now they may be Stomachful at you, they would have cause for ever to Thank and Bless you. Never fear then thus to *Lose* your friends, Sir, For this is the way to *Gain* them, and to make them the Fastest Friends World without end.

But if your Charity be so excessive, Sir, you think you must be *Unreasonably Kind* to your Friend, How can you so forget the *Poor*, as to give away their *Portion*, and never Stick to Rob them of the Relief, which the same *Law* whereby you hold all that you have, makes due to them? Methinks you should also Shrink at this *Unkindness* and Cruelty, this Fraud and Injury: And not let your fond *Indulgence* to a carnal Friend eat up your tender *Compassion* towards Gods Poor: Nor be kind to your Friend, with that which is none of your own, but *Theirs*. And though you are not to Rejoyce at this *Occasion* of their Relief, Yet neither must you stand in the way, to stop it from them, when by lawful *Forfeiture*, it falls to 'em.

Thirdly,

Thirdly. Are you loath to Spoil Company, and therefore you Interrupt not the Swearers that are some of the *Folliest* Sinners, least you should seem *Morose* and Ill humour'd? The *Cherfulness* of Society, I confess, Sir, it is the Sweetest *Sawce* of Humane Life: And I should be as backward as any to *Uphraid* the Innocent *Mirth* and Pleasantness of Conversation. But methinks 'tis very hard, Sir, if men cannot be *Pleasant*, but they must be *Prophane*: if it must quite *Marre* the Meeting, to be *Merry and Wise*: And no joy till they *Unman* themselves, and turn Bruits or Fiends, to tosse and bandy in Blasphemous Mouths the Ever-Blessed Name for a Pastime: and Powder their Games with Florid Oaths and Spice their Cups with more of the same: Not knowing how to be *Cheerful*, without being *Mad*, and because the Liquor pleases 'em, Pelt the Name of God, to pay him so for the Comfort. I believe, Sir, you may not be a Stranger to some, that would count themselves Dull and *Melancholy*, as a parcel of *Mop'd Fools*, where all the *Quickness* of Conceit, and the very *Life* of Conversation is gone, when they are under such a Confinement, that there must be no *Swearing*, for fear of the *Penalty*. But I pray you, Sir, were not all Men so confined before this *New*

Law,

Law, under a far more dreadful *Penalty* than any now Imposed in the *Act*? Sure their *Tongues* were never so their own, but by their *Words* they were to be *Justified*, and by their *Words* to be *Condemned*. And if this Spoil the Pleasure of any Society, O how well does that *Mirib* deserve to be so *Marred*? where Lewd Companions can make no *Sport*, but they must make God himself the Subject of their *Drollery*, and *Swear* away their God, and their Souls, and the best of all their Friends? The serious Remembrance of their Lord and Judge would strike such Rebels into their Dumps: and therefore they love to *Play* with the Being of God, as an Empty Name, to *Swear* by it, without *Believing* in it. yea their Customary *Swearing* by it, teaches them Still more to *Slight* and despise it: As if the God, whom they so often and *Absurdly* Appeal to, were but a Name for *Nothing*.

Now to turn the *Stream* of such Corrupt and abominable Communication, is the greatest Kindness to all the *Company*: That they may not go on so to Hew down themselves, and sadden the Souls of some, and Harden the Hearts of others. For were that which is so extremely *Noisome* and intolerably *Offensive* to God and
all

all Good Men but once *Wedded* out of their Conversation; As they could not but be much Easier to themselves at the bottom, so would they take off the Infamous *Brand* from their Names, and Recommend their Society to the Servants of God, who before fled it, as their *Nuisance* and Horror.

I cannot but admire, Sir, if one of your Accomplishments should not perfectly Abhor the *Ruffianly* Company that make *Oaths* and *Curses* their Game and Musick, and are not in their *Element*, till the place that holds 'em, become as the *Mouth of Hell*; full of such Blasphemies and *Exercations*, as would drive away any Serious Christian, that had the Calamity to be cast upon 'em, and send him to go and seek out a nother *Air* to breath in. You know better things, Sir, and are fit to keep better *Company*. 'Twill be your Wisdom then and Honor, either to Break off from 'em, or so Carry among 'em, as shall make them afraid and weary to do so Foolishly, and Wickedly: and thus really approve your self one of the most kind and Compassionate men, and even as a *Guardian Angel*, and their Good *Genius*, shedding an *Auspicious* Influence, to make all about you the better for you.

B

Fourthly,

Fourthly. Are you afraid, Sir, of Creating your self *Trouble*, by Encountering such Offenders, the *Wild Beasts* that are so apt to Kick and Bite; and not like to Spare any Men, when they no more Care even for the *Most-High*? And therefore though you cannot Approve of 'em yet for your own *Ease*, you Wink at 'em? I have a greater Esteem for you, Sir, than to push you upon the *Pikes*, where you might better sit still and be *Quiet*. I wish they were out of the way, that so much *Trouble* you and the World. And I only desire you may take the course to prevent farther *Trouble* with them for the future: Or if they continue to be Troublesome, I would so *Fortifie* you against them, that you may not stand in Awe of 'em. And I would direct you to such a Noble *Pleasure*, in the brave Discharge of your Place, as shall more than *Countervail* for all the *Trouble* which comes from that Quarter.

You know, Sir, there is some *Difficulty* in every thing that is *Praise-Worthy*: And he must never think of *Heaven*, that will not *Strive to Enter at the Streight Gate*. Such as are all for the *Easy* way are in no good likelihood for the Blessed *End*. And why are you *Advanced* above others, but that you should do *More* than others? your
Wealth

Wealth and your Honor was not given you that you should indulge to your Sloath and your Lust: But the more Promote his *Glory* who has put you in such a *Capacity*: And thereby obliged you to do the Nobler and Greater Service to God and men. If you shrink at the *Burden*, you are unworthy of the *Honor*. When the Giver of all Good has put enough into your Possession, to defray your *Charge*, and you have a *Reward* even in hand, as well as infinitely Better to Expect, if you well acquit your self. And the more you do, Sir, but the *better* still will it be for your self, as well as for others. You know, the man of God's own Approbation, was not for serving the Lord his God with that which *Cost him Nothing*. 2. Sam. 24. 24. And how will you take up the Cross, Sir, and lay down your Life for *Christ*, if you will not be but at so much *Trouble*, as I am putting you upon, for his sake? Does he not well *Deserve* it from you? And is he not *Able* to Recom-pence you? Or will he Forget your Zeal for his *Glory*, who leaves not unrewarded so much as a *Cup of Cold Water* given to his *Disciple*? And will you stick at a little *Trouble* for such a *Lord*, as stuck not at the greatest *Sufferings* for you? But where are the Formidable *Buggs*, at which you start back? Who or what are you afraid of

in his cause; O how did the *Primitive Martyrs* despise all the Indignities and Cruelties *Barbarous Tyrants* could cast upon 'em, rather than *Dishonor* him that Call'd 'em! They would *Dye bravely* for him, rather than *Live basely* without him. God be thanked, Sir, we are not brought to that *Dilemma*, no body threatens us now with Death or Danger for our Obedience. But we have the Laws of God and Man both on our side: And instead of *Persecution* for our Religion, there are *Penalties* for Affronting its Blessed *Author*. And when some will be so Wicked, as to *Incur* the Punishment rather than not *Dishonor* the Lord; Will you be so *Pusillanimous*, as to let them carry all before 'em, and say you will not *Mettle*, to stir in the *Nests* of such *Venemous Creatures*, that have *Stings* instead of *Tongues*; least they should shew themselves, *Like* themselves? And alas, What can they do? And why will you be Daunted with a *Rout* of Rebels, engag'd in a *Scandalous Cause*? why such *Cringing* to their Humor, for dread of their Displeasure? True Courage and Resolution, Sir, will *Steel* and Harden you against more *Arduous Encounters* than these. Where indeed the Worst is at *First*: And it will make the Hard things Easie, but to be *Resolv'd* upon 'em, and *Used* to 'em.

When

When you have but made your self known for an *Avenger* of Heaven's Affronts, you will not then be so *Dar'd* and Tempted every where. Your Acquaintance and Company will then be more Modest and *Mannerly*: And (holding themselves in from the Guilt) save you the labour of Punishing. When they see that you will bring those to Submit for Wrath who will not do it for *Conscience* Sake. Whereas if they find you *Easie*, and Careless of Gods Glory They'll make as Bold as they List with you, yea and take a *Pride* to Trample your Justice and Authority.

Indeed if you will not *Brow beat*, but Encourage the Conscientious witnesses, I cannot promise you, Sir, but you may hear your *Gates* the oftner knockt at; and find somewhat more to do, in Hearing what they have to say. But would God, Sir, you had no worse *Guests*, than such as put you upon the *Best work* you can do: And though they give you a little Trouble at present, lay in matter for your future Everlasting *Comfort*. That you may hear at the last from your great Master, *Well done Good and Faithful servant Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

Fifthly. Are you afraid of getting *Ill-will*, should you Pursue matters Home, according

ding to the Tenure of this good Law, *against Cursing and Swearing*? 'Tis very like, Sir, you may be Spighted, for your Zeal and *Warmness* upon such Occasions. We may well expect the Obnoxious to *Bark*, and make a Noise, and rather shew their Rage, than their Gladness, at the Remedy newly provided: And how much they had rather, that no such *Rubs* and *Bars* had been laid across the Swearers way. But are these, Sir, to be Judges in the Case? must the *Malefactors* get up on the Bench to Arraign the Laws that are against them? What if they call it nothing but *Ill-will* and Malice, which you know to be the truest Friendship and Kindness? You must not be so much Concerned, Sir, to *Please*, as to *Save* them: Nor think it worth while to Gratifie their Humour, or Court their Favour, at the Loss of his Honor and Love; to whom you are infinitely more *Oblig'd*, and who is infinitely more to be *Regarded* (not only than the contemptible *Rabble*, but) than the dearest *Friends*, or the biggest *Potentates*. What if *Men* do not Like you, when *God* with his Favour Embraces you? Will you value the Approbation of pitiful *Worms*, above his Countenance, who is the *Greatest* and the *Best*? What if they be Angry, on whom you Inflict the Penalty? When 'tis *Anger without a Cause*,

Cause, being nothing at all but what they have pull'd on their own heads? And what is the Loss of a Little *Money*, to prevent the Loss of a *Soul*, more Worth than the whole World? Such as are Souer with you, Sir, when you do them but Justice and Kindness, will after find you a better Friend, than any of their own *Knot*, that Swear how they Love 'em, and Swear at you, for Abusing 'em. 'Tis nothing but their *Distemper* that makes them now so *Frantick*: If ever they come to be Healed, they will be otherwise minded. And who would regard the Exclamations of a *Bel-dam* Rout against him? Or to Lose himself with such as are Lost to all that is *Wise* and *Good*? If these Stomach you, for doing them Justice, and God Glory, Does it sway so much with you, Sir, what such as they say, who care not what the *Lord* himself Says? What matter for the Opinion or the *Prate* of those, that are so extreamly out? O, Sir, Scorn the Noise of such Enemies to God, as the *Common Swearers*: Who will all be struck *Speechless* in the Judgment, and made to eat their Words, and the *Tongues* too, which they us'd as Weapons of Rebellion against Heaven.

But are you startled to find some of better *Note* and Worth among 'em? If so,

Sir, you'll be very Kind to these, in shaming and scaring them out of such *Scandalous* Company. Are they Good *Honest* Men? *Wise* Men? And Persons of Honor too? And of these you are most Timorous to incur the Displeasure. And here you think you had best Consider well what you do. And I will now take it into Consideration, with you.

Do you then hear the Good *Honest* man Guilty of *Prophane* Cursing and Swearing? If that be Possible; It's great Pity: and should such be the Case, you'll do well to Commend the man for his *Honesty*: but not stick to Punish him for his *Impiety*. Peradventure he is so far *Honest*, as not to be a *Lier*, *Theif*, or *Adulterer*? Tho you know, Sir, that the Notion which some have of their Good *Honest* man, will take in a very *Lewd* man, and one that is far from being an *Upright*, *Just* man. For an *Honest* man, we say, will be as Good as his Word. And even common Justice will oblige him to Render unto all their *Dues*. But how is he as Good as his Word, who makes nothing of the most Solemn Engagement to his God? And what Rendering to all their *Dues*? When God himself is by such, left out of the *Reckoning*, and no Care taken to pay unto him whom they

they owe most of all to, the Honour due to his Name? and what Trust is to be reposed in his Honesty, who can be so False to God and to his own Soul? Surely, Sir, that mans Goodness must lye in a very Narrow Compass, who can be found in such a Horrid Guilt against the Honor of God, and against his strictest Commands, and his most Terrible Threatnings, as the Common Swearing; which gives Evidence against a man, that he is (*læsæ Majestatis reus*) Guilty of High Treason against the Crown and Dignity of Heaven. A Wickedness which stands in so direct Opposition to our Christian Rule, that I see not how any man can be indeed a Christian who allows himself in it. And I know not where is his Conscience or Integrity, who dare commonly Blaspheme the Blessed Name, that ought for ever to be had in the highest Veneration, and never to be mentioned, but with all Religious Reverence and Awful Regard. I doubt not, Sir, but you have heard many a Notorious Swearer called a Good Honest Fellow; But I hope such his Reputed Goodness shall not Terrifie you from doing him Justice.

Again Do you think, Sir, you must not take upon you to Correct the man of Understanding, and the Scholar, who should know

know what they have to do, and not need to be so *Tutor'd*? But if such have yet learn'd no better manners, than to be *common Swearers*, Be sure that is none of their *Wisdom*. And when they will so play the *Fool*, I think they ought never the less, but so much the more to *Smart* for it, because they know more than the *Most*, and yet do as bad as the *Worst*. Alas, Sir, how does the *Sensible* Mans *Wisdom* here most wretchedly fail him, To think that God does not *Hear*, or will not *Require* it, or could not *Avenge* it? And to venture Purse and Soul, for no Purchase, but his own, and Gods *Dishonor*? Wise men use to make better *Bargains*, than to pay a dear Rate, for that which is stark naught. 'Tis the *Fool* that parts with his Money so Easily. And will you Reverence the *Wisdom* of that *Absurd* Creature, who can find a God to *Swear* by, but none to *Pray* to? That piece of Contradiction, who owns a Glorious God, only to *Disrobe*, and Plunder him of his Glory? Playing with the God-Provoking and Soul Damning Wickedness, like *Horse and Mule that have no Understanding*. Because the Inconsiderate wretches are Blinded and Lost in their own Follies and Impieties, they think the *Omniscient* God must see and know no more than such *Bruits* as themselves: And shew what a Vile Opinion they have of God?

God's *Inspection*, When they can be more
Dast and aw'd with the Presence of a poor
Mortal Man, Than with the Observation
of the only Wise Eternal God. Well does
the *Psalmist* lash such Beasts of the people,
Psalm. 94. 8, 9, 10. *Understand ye Bru-*
tish among the people, and ye Fools when will ye
be Wise! He that planted the Ear, shall he
not Hear? He that formed the Eye, shall he
not See? He that Teacheth man Knowledge shall
not be know? How Judicious and Cunning
soever they may be accounted, would any
Wise men, at the Peril of their Immortal
Souls, make so Bold with the great God,
Holy and Just, and think he will always
so take it at their hands? Would they so des-
perately Throw at him, as if they could
easily deal with him? Do they know whom
they Resist? When better have the whole
World, and all men and Devils, than one
God against them: O what an Unequal
Match is it, Sir, for a pitiful crawling Worm,
to oppose the Invincible Power that Rear'd
and Sustains all the mighty Fabrick of
Heaven and Earth? who but a Mad-Man
will be for the Desperate Service, to Fight
with a Consuming Fire? Silly Animals! How
soon can he Kill, and Cast thee into Hell?
Let the Postbeard Strive with the Postbeards
of the Earth: Wo to that Fool-hardy Sinner,
who will enter the Lists, to try Strength
with

with his Omnipotent Maker! *The Foolish people have Blasphemed thy Name.* Psal. 74. 18. None else would ever offer to do it. And surely, Sir, as well may you venture to Confront their *Wisdom*, as they to Confront the *Wisdom of the Nation*, in Playing with that as but a *Jesting Matter*, which our great Senate calls a *Detestable Sin*: And thinks fit to shew their Horror of it, in making the Strictest Law against it. Is it so Heinous to call them to account, who can be so senseless to *Exasperate* the Lord and for ever to Lose God? By taking the Impudent Liberty, ever and anon to offer him such *Barbarous* Indignities? What if they take it ill to be *Controuled*, who, without any Sense, and against all the Fear of God (and *as* were, in Spight of him) take and keep up such a wickedness; which one would imagine should need no more, but any considering man's *Betinking* himself, to turn his heart against it, and make him Resolve, never to have any thing more to do with it?

But is any *Great man*, or Person of *Honor* in this foul Guilt? And must they be made Exceptions from the Common Rules of Justice? And do you think, Sir, it would be accounted an Offence greater than all their *Swearing*, and never to be *Forgiven*, should you let the Law have its Course there, and

and put their *Honors*, or their *Worships* upon *Record*? But are not they the Kings *Subjects* as well as others? And is there ever a Clause in the *Act* to Exempt the *Noble* or *Gentile* Swearers? Must that Nobility and Gentility *Indemnifie*, which renders them indeed but the more deeply Guilty? Because they move in a *Sphere* above others, and are more observed and followed; and so capable of doing the greater good or Mischief, Their *Exorbitant* Pattern and Poysonous Influence therefore makes them more *Responsible*, for all whom they Seduce and Ruine. And if Noble Men will *Prophanely* Curse and Swear, Sure they are never the *Nobler* for it: Tho they may think so to add to their *Grandure*, and to make themselves look *Bigger* still, by such *Thundring* against Heaven, and shewing how Bold they dare make with him, whom all the World *Adores*: Swearing for the *Gallantry* of the thing, to be thought the Braver men, for venturing so to set the Great God at *Defiance*. Is this their *Ingenuity* and *Gratitude*, so to *Depress* him that has *Exalted* them? And when they are *Rais'd* to Honor, To have a *Pique* at his Honor, Least it should Darken them, to own a *Greater* than themselves; Does it not rather, Sir, extreamly Lessen their *Character*, so to Scorn their Glorious *Maker*, and greatest *Benefactor*?

Benefactor? O what Loses a man more, than the very *Pride* and *Haughtiness*, whereby he reckons only still more to *Greaten* himself? And of all the Proud Humors, which so *Detestable* as the *Insolence* against God, and *Scorning* to be under him? What Honor can I have for him, who has none for his *God*? Indeed how can he ever expect it from me? When men of outward *Dignity* will so *Degrade* themselves, by their *Impiety*; How can we help it that they make themselves *Vile*, and fit only to be *Despised*, by all whose eyes God hath opened? *Psal.* 15 4. If they will be found some of the Cursed Crew, that are the *Hate* of Heaven, who that is true to the Honor of his Lord, can heartily Honor such Objects of his *Contempt*? who do but teach others to *Slight* them, As they do One that is infinitely more their *Superior*? What Names or *Titles* can Credit that *Un-godliness*, which makes them *Enemies* to God? If they will fall so *stout* upon Him; after he has so highly Obligated them, Is it not the more *shame* for 'em? For certainly God will make his *Despisers* *Despised*. In good truth they do make themselves so. And they must not think to have the Less *Contempt*, but the Greater, because they are such *Great* Enemies. Tho we must not be so *Rude* to deny them the Civil Ho-

nor

nor due to their Places, yet neither must we be so *Impious*, to Honor them, to Gods Dishonor. And what reason have we to Respect them more, than they do the Glorious *Lord* that made them? How can I fall down to them, as the *Sons of Honor*, who can take a *Pride* to turn their Tongues to his *Reproach*, without whom they could not so much as *Move* them at all? And like some surly Animals, lye *Snapping* at the Hand that gives them *Bread*? Shall Traytors to Heaven think to be *Honorable*, for that which makes them *Abominable*? If they will throw themselves upon a Level with the *Rascally* people, for that sort of Wickedness which even the *Basest Villain* has as good a Claim to, and can make himself as *Eminent* for. They must not take it *Heinously* to be served accordingly. Or take it as they will, 'Tis the most *Unnatural* thing for any, that have a Sense of Gods Honor, to pay a *Profound Honor* to his *Notorious Enemies*. If the *Best and Greatest* in the *World* must never be *Preferred* before *Him*: Much less must we *Slight* him for the sake of some of the most *Corrupt* Limbs of Mankind, who would be *Famous* for their *Daring Impieties*, and be thought *Great* for *Exalting* themselves above all the *Commands and Threats* of *God*: *Scorning* to be so *Low-Spirited*, as to *Fear Hell*

Hell and Damnation; and Flowting them that hearken so much to the Despis'd *Jesus*, whom it seems themselves Bow to, only in *Mockery*: And when our great Law-Giver bids them, *Swear not at all*, they in effect, reply *Pish* we Regard it not at all. Let him say what he will, we will be *Above* his Word. But they shall not be Above his *Judgments*. Nor are they above the *Laws* neither, were they but duely Executed.

You see, Sir, in the late *Posthumous* Print, What a Person of *Honor* has said, to the everlasting Dishonor of *Cu. Mr. Boyle*. *stomary Swearing*: In shewing how Silly and *Defenseless* is the Wickedness; and taking so much pains to *Expose* it: that he might *Argue*, and School, and shame those of his *Quality*, out of that *Rudeness* with Heaven, which casts such a *Blot* on their Nobility, that he counts it *Impudent* in them to expect our Esteem, and *Profuseness* in us, to Squander it upon them, for the Recompence of their *Vice*. And I hope, Sir, you will think that Renowned *Author* fitter to be Heard than any the Proudest *Swearer*. The World knows he had sense and *Honor* all over. But all *Prophane Swearers* make themselves Senseless and *Ignominious*, And so they are to be Regarded thereafter.

Be

Be they who or what they will then, Sir, that put themselves under the *Devil's* Banner, to engage in that Cursed Cause, they are not too *Wise*, nor too *Good*, nor too *Great*, to Answer for it to *God* in another World; nor to the *Powers Ordained of God* in this World. And therefore, Fear not, Sir, to shew your self for the God of Heaven, tho it be against a whole *Host* of the Proudest of his Foes, who must and shall be all confounded and *Quell'd*. And though you should thus be out with them, The Wisest and Best of men will *Like* you never the worse for that. But you shall have the sweet Satisfaction from *Within*, and that Blessed Peace from *Above*, as will more than make you Amends for all their Flouts and Frowns.

Sixthly. Are you afraid, Sir, to be Censured for *Singular*, *Precise*, and a *Busie-Body*; should you faithfully Acquit your self in your Place as a truly Christian *Magistrate*; To Countenance the Pious and Suppress the Prophane? Do you ask me, What, shall I be like *No body*, to go and set my self vigorously against the *Common Swearers*? I am heartily sorry, Sir, if the Age be so Degenerate that you should justly Doubt of *Company* in so Laudable an *Enterprise*. Yet I hope you will not stand
C alone;

alone, but find a happy *Concurrence* of such as shall equally Concern themselves in the Trust committed to you I am *Sure* of some, and *Hopeful* of many more; that will be with you.

But should never so many stand off; what Hazard would it be to your Reputation, that you are not like the *Most*, and that you keep in a *Narrower* Path than is commonly taken? If your Example must be the *Reproof* of others, the Shame will be theirs, but the greater Honour still to your self; That you do the thing, which they ought to do, and are greatly to *Blame*, to Hide themselves in the most Glorious Cause. Tis Grating, I know, Sir, That your Zeal should pluck some of your Brethren by the *Sleeve*; but must you, in such a grand *Complement* to them, bear them Company in the Notorious Neglect of their Duty? And not offer to be Faithful to your Trust, because so Few will be your Partners in the Work? Can you think it Best to do as the *Most* do? When he that Made you, and will Judge you, Forbids you to *Follow the Multitude*, if it be to do *Evil*? Whatever be their Names or Numbers, as they can none of 'em, by their Examples, *Extenuate*, or alter the Nature of Guilt, to make the *Detestable* Sin, a *Venial*

nial Peccadillo; So neither can they Prevent or *Alleviate* the Punishment of their Followers, who on the Presumption of their Judgment or Practice, will Venture to be their *Companions* in the common Corruptions, and Palliations of'em.

Sociable Sinners, that followed the *Multitude* in their Lewd Courses, must look to share with them in their Just Curses. And to be found Upright in the midst of a Crooked and Perverse Generation, is no small Commendation, and will find more than a Common Salvation. But how can you, Sir, be trusty to your Lord, when Determined more by others ways, than by his *Word*? And what Life of Grace do you shew, when you Swim as *Dead* things do, only down the Common *Stream*? O let your Zealous Concern, like a mighty *Torrent*, shew but the greater Fierceness for Opposition. And let others *Perfidiousness* have no other Influence upon you, but only to provoke you in a holy *Indignation* at them, to go beyond them.

But if you think it such Ill manners, Sir, not to Comply with the Rest, be they never so much out, or Shamefully *Deficient*: Then where is the Good Manners to *Hea-*

ven, and now to *King* and *Parliament*, the highest Powers we have on Earth, when they shall all be Slighted, in Compliance with a *Sorry Pack*, and a very Criminal Party? If you look about you for company, Sir, to see who will be on your side, before you Stir: If you ask, as *Psal. 94. 16* *Who will Rise up for me against the Evil doers? Or who will Stand up for me against the Workers of Iniquity?* God be thanked, Sir, No such room now for the Objection of that *Singularity*, When you have the *King* himself, to whose Example all use to be so Proud of Shaping themselves, and one of the most *August Assemblies* in the World, to be your *Abettors*, in standing up to Fight the *Lords Battels*.

Or should you, by some still, be thought never so Singular, yet I see no Cause you have to be Asham'd of it *Singularly*, which the Wisdom of God, and the Wisdom of the *Nation* puts you upon. And though you had not so much Company as you have, yet how much better, Sir, to be Pious alone, than Ungodly, with never so much Company? I know you will, one day, be glad to be found among the *Little Flock*; and I understand not why you should count it so *Infamous*, though you be one of 'em at present.

And

And as little Startling (if you well Consider it, Sir) is the Charge of *Preciseness*. For you cannot but know what sort of men use to call that *Holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord, by this Name. And there are Terms of *Reputed* Infamy, that much more *Credit*, than *Disgrace* the persons they are cast at: If we but observe what kind of *Nomenclators* they come from; such as Brand every thing with a hard *Title*, that does not jump with their own debauch'd and Prophane humor. And you shall quickly have never a Vertue, Grace, or Good Quality left you, Sir, if you must be run out of it, as fast as any Silly Tongues or Black mouths *Mis-call* it. If they have called the Master of the house *Belzebub*, how much more shall they call them of his household? Mat. 10. 25. And if you are Derided on this account, It will be with abundance of the *Best Company*: When not only all Conscientious *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, but *King* and *Parliament* also are now some of these *Precisians*. You are a Young Christian if you cannot Slight and Scorn the Slanders of such *Authors*: For Displeasing whom, any cause is indeed but so much the Better to be *Lov'd*. But you know, Sir, who charges you to *Walk Circumspectly*, be they never so many of your Acquaintance, who are for walking

at Large, after the *Course of this World*. And you know *What manner of persons we ought to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness*: And when alas, so *Few* are really such, The Word which you profess to Believe for Eternal Truth, will tell you, How few are like to be for ever *Happy*. And God grant, Sir, That you and I may be of that *Number*, however they hear now from a *Vain Mistaken World*.

But you would not be thought a *Busy-Body*? Nor would I ever perswade you, Sir, to be such, in the Infamous sense which holy *Scripture* condemns. For, as *Impertinents* can be busie, without *Working* at all, and take a deal of *Pain* to do *Nothing* (All their *Fermentation* being but a mere *Nugation*, and the eager pursuit of that which turns to no *Account*) So 'tis a Fault that Creates abundance of *Mischief* in the *World*, when we will be such *Eccentricks*, to concern our selves in others Affairs, without any good *End*, and to no good *End*: More for *Curiosity*, or *Malignity*, than for any necessity or charity. And there may be the great *Outcry* against others vices, but to *Hide* our own: And a heavy *Crimination* of them, only to *Set off* our selves. But ill does the *Office* sit upon any one, to be such a *Keeper of the Vineyards*, as to let all lie

lie *Uncultivated* at Home. When he is to *Begin* there, and to be *Severest* upon *Himself*, where he may make *Boldest*. Nor must our Zeal out run either our *Discretion*, or our *Meekness*, or our *tender Consideration* of others *Infirmities*, and our *Charitable Allowance* for their *Unavoidable Failings*. But when *Prosecuting* our *Brother overtaken with a Fault* we must consider our *selves*, lest we also be *Tempted*. And not be so *Byassed* with any *Piques* or *Partialities*, but that we *Cautiously* proceed by *Regular* steps, in the *Uprightness* of our hearts; and carefully keep within the *Compass* both of *Gods Laws* and *Mans*.

Yet this notwithstanding, Sir, There is a *Looking also on the things of others*, which is a *Commanded Duty*. *Phil. 2. 4.* And the best of the *Seven Churches*, *Rev. 2. 2.* was *Praised* for this, That she *could not Bear them that were Evil*. And though some expect much *Commendation* for their quiet *peaceable* humor, when they cry, Let every one look to themselves, *We will not Meddle nor make*: yet you know, Sir, How good a man he was, that doggedly replied, *Am I my Brothers Keeper?* *Gen. 4. 9.* And indeed such as have turn'd up the *Reins*, and forgot the *Government* of them-

selves are like to be no well-willers to any good *Discipline*, but had rather all should be left at *Random*, than any *Restraint* laid upon such as need it, to *Oblige* them to be better than they have a *Mind* to. Such as most put forth themselves for the *Glory* of God, and the *Good* of our *Souls*, these are the *Pragmatical* Medlers, which of any, they can least away with; As most *Disturbing* their beloved *Security*; and *Labouring* to *Introduce* that *Reverence* of God, and *Regularity* of *Life*, which severs only to *Exasperate* them, and put 'em to *Confusion*.

But the *Charity*, Sir, which teaches you to *Love* your *Neighbour* as your *Self*, can do no less sure, than oblige you to be *Concerned* for *Preventing* his *Hurt*, and *Promoting* his *Good*, by all means under your *Power*, whenever it falls in your way. And if every *Christian* in his capacity, what in him lies, stand engag'd to care for the *Publick* Good, and for his *Neighbours* Good, Much more the *Magistrate* and the *Minister*. And who then but the *Silly* or *Perverse*, will call them *Busy Bodies*, for the *Faithful* and *Zealous* Discharge of their *Offices*? which chiefly consist in the *Discipline* and *Regulation* of others? But whatever *Censors* are hard upon 'em for it, they ought to be so *Busy*, and *Hoc Agere*: That they

they may not teach the people to *Transgress*, nor leave them to Stray and be Lost as sheep without *Sheppards*: But watch over 'em, and be *Intent* upon this very thing, as those that must be Accountable for all that Perish, through their Neglect and Default. And such as are now Traduced, for doing more than *Others*, will not think they have *Over-done* it, when they come to dye: But the Lazy and Perfidious Magistrates and Ministers, that are only Busie in *Censuring* such as Exceed them, shall then too late wish, they had done Like 'em.

Be pleas'd then, Sir, to accept in good part that Word of *Exhortation*, wherein I shall also think my Self concern'd to take a Share. Seeing now a *Price* is put into all our hands, and every one is impower'd if not by admonition or correction to reclaim others, yet by Testimony, to bring the Offenders that Plague us to *Punishment*: ● that it may Awaken all our Zeal, to Suppress and Grub up the Rampant, *Topping* Wick- edness, that so long has Reign'd and Swag- gered, to set all the former Laws at Defi- ance. However the Children of the *Devil*, his Trusty Servants, swell and hang their heads at the Attempt, to Dispossess their *Master*. Sure all that Fear and Love God will Rejoyce in the *New Opportunity* now set before us. And in the name of God, Sir,
Let

let us take Heart, and make some fresh *Experiments*, to see what will be done now, more than yet has been done ; to Deliver us from this *Curse* and *Reproach*, that has so long lain upon us. And let not such an Excellent Statute lie as a *Dead* thing among us ; Lest it one day *Rise* up in Judgment against us. Let us neither be Ashamed nor Afraid to do the Justice, whereby those Ends may be obtained, that are now Designed. Instead of Pleasing the Criminal *Faction* into their Ruin, and Suffering them quite to *Undo* the Land which so long they have made to *Groan* under 'em : Rather be pleased, Sir, to Imitate our Wise and Pious *Law-Makers*, who from the common Corruption, and even Universal *Prevalence* of this Crying Wickedness, have taken occasion to express their Keener *Sentiments* against it ; Contriving the Good *Law*, which Blessed be God that put it into the hearts of some to Promote, and answered 'em in the wishes of their hearts, to see it brought to perfection. And O that none of those who should *Awe* the Prophane Generation, and make them Afraid to be so Rude with Heaven in their Presence, may give 'em *Boldness* yet farther to carry on the wicked Humor : But, if it be Possible, help to Stop them in the ill *Damnable* way they are upon, and make others dread to follow 'em. But

But before I press you, Sir, with the *Enforcements* of this Exhortation, let me here give you the Apostles Caution, *Jud. 22. Of some have Compassion, Making a Difference.* For even of Swearers that are Faulty, all are not alike Guilty; And some therefore to be used with *Lenity*, Others to be handled more *Severely*. They be *Prophane Swearers*, whom the *A&T* has mark'd out for Prosecution; and though all Swearing is *Prophane*, that is not *Sacred*: And none is *Sacred*, but what is made an *Act of Religious Worship*; Solemnly to Invoke the Searcher of Hearts, and the Judge of Right and Wrong, as the *Witness* of our Truth, and Sincerity, and the *Avenger* of all Falshood and Iniquity: which we are never to do, but upon very Weighty occasions, and when we have a Just Call to it, and good Warrant for it. Yet by *Prophane*, I humbly Conceive, the *A&T* intends all such Bold and Rude Swearing, in common chat, as is *Inconsistent* with the Fear of God, and so highly *Offensive* to all Sober Good men. For even the man whose heart, in the main, is *Right with God*, may yet Transgress through *Inadvertence*, and Surprize, and the Violence and urgency of *Temptations*: And as soon, as he is made sensible of the
Slip,

Slip, declare his Concernment with Sorrow for it, and severely Judge himself, and heartily thank his Monitor, and seriously promise Amendment. And in my opinion, Sir, such a case calls for *Pity*, rather than the *Penalty*. Surely, Sir, a great Distinction is to be made between this, and the Mad Customary-Swearer? That Swears on, as in *Defiance* of Laws Human and Divine; and Extentiates, if not Justifies the Guilt; makes a Mock of his Sin, and Advocates for it: And instead of Recoiling upon himself, is ready rather to fly in the face of his Reprover: Scorns all Warning, will not be Reclaimed, is far from being Ashamed, and *Hates to be Reformed*. What is the Law designed for, Sir, if not to *Maul* and *Batter*, or at least to *Muzzel* and *Chain* up such Head-Strong *Beasts* of the People, that make even a *Trade* of Swearing, as if they had been Bound to the *Devil*, and serv'd their *Apprentiship*; and become such Masters of the *Hellish Craft*, that they are past all Apprehensions of the *Horror*, and scarce so much as take notice, even of the thing it self: And instead of Fearing an Oath, count nothing more Ridiculous, than such *Prosseness*: Swearing so thick, as if they were in *Halt*, to fill up the *Measure* of their *Wickedness*, and would take the *Shortest Cut* to that *Damnation* which they

so often *Imprecate*. When they scarce use the Name of *God*, but as their *Bauble*, and make him the matter of their *Infernal Merriment*; Where the Children of *Hell* Smile, and shew how much they are taken with the Humour; to see their Maker and Saviour Run down and Trampled: As if the great *Lord* of all were not so good as their *Servant*; And he whom they fall on their Knees to in the *Church*, were fit only to be *Ridicul'd* somewhere else. Even in such Fraternities, whose *Dearness* arises only from the Humour of *Prophaneness*; and they are great *Friends*, for being all of 'em *Gods Enemies*: such Enemies as can never let him alone, but Pursue him even Continually. And as our Enemy is for hitting us in the place where he thinks we can least endure to be *Touch'd*, and we are too Free in pouring out words to the Disgrace of those whom we do not *Love*, so if *God* be most Tender of his *Glory*, they are most madly bent against it: If their Impious Swearing so Highly *Affront* him, he shall be sure to have *Enough* of it; and nothing more usually heard amongst them. As if they would even pluck the *Crown* off his head, and strike into the very *Apple* of his *Eye*. O what a Sting and Rancor does it argue at the bottom, when from the *Abundance* of the Heart the Mouth so pours out!

out! Such monstrous *Excrefcencies* and filthy Botches of their common Discourse, notoriously betray the Malignant Putrid *Principle* whence they Proceed. But I need not add any thing to *Blacken* their Names, who are so hard at it, to *Foam out their own Shame*. But truly, Sir, such *Captains* in the Devils Troops, the *Jeroboams* that make others Sin, they need the *Lash* which the Law has provided. And I must tell you Sir, 'Tis very dangerous to be any *Abettors* of 'em, or to have any part or Lot with the Rebels, at whose Destruction God will *Laugh*, as they do at his *Dishonor*. Even to Excuse for them, may be *Innuendo*, sufficient to make you reckoned as one of 'em. And such as make Light of the Wickedness, do but make themselves too well known for greater Friends to Gods Enemies, than to Himself: And more forward to take their Part than to Appear and Contend for his Honor.

Ah, Dear Sir, who that has any thing of Gods Grace in his heart can sit still, and Tamely hear *Peals* of Oaths Rung in his ears, and the Almighty Lord of all Dar'd and Vilified, by every Wretched Swearer? O here if ever, Sir, shew your Zeal for the Lord of Hosts. Let your Spirit be *Stirred*, and your Heart *Burn* within you, to hear the

the Horrid Oaths and Curses, whereby the great name of God is so Dishonored, and our Religion made a Very Scorn to *Jews* and the *Infidel* World. Especially Look narrowly to all within your particular *District*; as many as ever you can Influence, that what so highly Provokes God may never Thrive under your *Shadow*. For this is the *Filial* Ingenious Love of God, more grievously to Resent the Dishonor done to our Heavenly Father, than any Disgrace reflected on our selves: And to count his Foes more Noisom to us, than any that touch us so in our own Dearest Interests: yea to Pursue them as our worst Enemies, tho not to Reak our *Vengeance*, yet in Legal ways, to help them to *Justice*.

In your own Wrongs, Sir, it will become you to Personate the *Deaf* man: But so to put up the Indignities against the Majesty of Heaven were such *Misprision* of Treason, as would render your self *Obnoxious*. And if at one time you can *Diessmble* your Observation of that, which you *Publish* at another, telling how many Oaths you heard such a one swear: what do you but thus bear *Witness* against your self, what a Subject you are to God and the King both; And how many *Forfeitures* you should have taken, which you did not; And so how many

many bigger *Amercements* ought to be Levy'd upon you for that Default? When such Injury and Affront is offer'd to the best Laws, That in cases so Notorious, *Justice* should no better be done, even by those that are set up on purpose to do it.

Whoever beg your *Pardon* here, Sir, 'tis not in your Power to *Forgive* 'em. All that I understand you can Lawfully do, is as an Equitable Judge, to Temper your *Summum Jus*, and Abate the Rigor, according to the Quality of the Offender: *i. e.* If he be not Impudent and Hardned, But Relenting and Hopeful. But to let the *Laughing* and the *Resolute Swearer* Escape, is not Mercy, but Treachery yea and Cruelty: Cruelty to his Soul, and to the Publick, both which he is Labouring to Ruine.

In a common Calamity, Sir, As when a Town is on *Fire*, every Neighbour is to Lend a Helping hand, all to do what they can. And if there be no Saving the Whole, yet to Rescue as much as they are able out of the devouring Flames. And when our *Nation* is under such a Calamity, by reason of the Common Wickedness, this in particular of *Customary Swearing*, so Flagrant and Raging every where, the Tongue being such a *Fire as enflames the very Course of Nature*,

Nature, and is it self set on Fire of Hell. Jam. 3. 6. shall we stand by as *Unconcerned Spectators*, and instead of offering any Help, shew our selves much pleased with the Sight? Like *Nero* who Fiddled, and made himself merry with the Fire that burnt down his City. (A Pleasure fit for one of such a *Stigmatized* Name as all do abhor!) O no Sir, God forbid, we should be so wretchedly Stupid, so obdurately Wicked. But as in a dreadful Fire, the doleful Cry is, *Help, O Help for the Lords sake*: so here, let Magistrates and Ministers and all private Christians, in their respective Places, *Help, Help for the Lords sake*. And for our dear Church and Countrey's sake; Yea for *Credit*, and *Conscience* sakes; and for all our precious *Souls* sake: That we may not bring them, nor our Land in *Feard* any more, either by falling into the Heinous guilt our selves; Or by our *Connivance*, or *Indulgence*, make our selves *Accessory* to the guilt of others.

First then, Good Sir, *Help for God's sake*: and do somewhat like the *Obliged* of the *Lord*, for him that *Made* you, and has been so abundantly *Kind* to you. Will you *Esponse* the *Quarrel* of your *Friend* and in a *Generous Indignation*, shew your *Warmth* and *Mettle*, at his *Defamation*,

D

If

*If any touch my Friend or his Good Name,
It is my Honor and my Love, to Free
His Blasted Fame*

From the least Spot, or thought of Blame.

And does not your Supreme Benefactor Deserve as well from you? When one in Heaven is infinitely more your Friend than all your Friends upon Earth, Can you be, not only so Cold, But so Perfidious to him, when he is most courtesly used; yea and most basely Affronted, not to think your self Concerned? O Sir, I hope you will not so Imitate those whom you ought to Punish, the Swearers that can stand upon the nicest Punctilios for themselves, but leave Gods Honor to shift for it self. Can you hang the head at a Reproachful word spoken against you, and Boil with secret Indignation, where the Enemy is to fight for you; and Burst out upon him, if you can Cope with him? And is his Name and Honor worth Nothing with you, who is Infinitely, more Regardable than Ten Thousand of us? O where is your Zeal and Fidelity to him, and to what your self do Profess, when you would be called his Servant, if you can see all Betrayed and Ravished, and be no more Touched, than if all were according to your Wishes? When one speaks Villany, another Laughs at it, a Third Defends it, who that is not all Earth

can

can bear this? (*Bp. Hall.*) Is it Gods Cause only that makes you luke warm and *Pblegmatick*? O Sir, when you but Remember, *Who he is*, Sure you will never think you can do enough for him, that is so Infinitely Great and Good. And when you know what is most Grateful to him, and he has put it into your Power, will you refuse to do so much for him? After he has so Declared himself to be most Jealous of his Glory, shall any thing be so Dear to you, as that which is so Tender to him? Can you Love him and Honor him, and yet signifie no Indignation against such as treat his Glorious Name with the greatest Contempt and Scorn? Can you Laugh at those that Grieve his Spirit? and make some of the Bitterest of his Foes your Intimate Friends? who but his Enemies take his Name in Vain? And shall such inherit your Kindness and Careless, as if they had done the most Obliging Meritorious Service, to throw Dirt at your Lord? Do you so Provoke the Lord to Jealousy? Is any better than He? And is that your Loving him above all, to prefer a Vile Sinner before him? Yea to take part with his very Enemies against him?

Sir, We shall not find it enough in the great day of Final Accounts, to say, Lord

we have not *Profaned* thy Name. For he will tell us, I sent you into the World to *Glorifie* my Name upon Earth: And where you might, and would not, *Stand* up for me, you did *Despise* me. O then for Gods sake Sir, Appear in vindication of his *Aspersed* Honor, that when so Few care for it, or will do any thing in Faithfulness to Promote it, He may give you that *Elogium*, Gen. 7. 1. *Thee have I seen Righteous before me in this Generation.*

Secondly. What will you do, Sir, for *Christs* sake, who pour'd out his very Hearts Blood for yours? Can you Forget or Slight him, who is your very *Life* and your only *Hope*? And make the Lightest account of his *Love* and his *Death*? Have you no more Kindness, nor Gratitude, or Honor for such a Friend? And how will you express your Resentment of all his Astonishing Favours? Will you only give him a *Jewish Hail*, and the Lying Complement, to cry, *Glory be to the Son*, and pay your *Nod* to his Name, while you make but a Scorn of his Religion, and count his Yoke *Intolerable*, *Not to Swear at all*? But when he has so signified his Pleasure, can you love him; and yet take no Care to Promote it? You know, Sir, how *Studious* and forward true Love is always to Please. And I am
sure

sure, you can never Gratifie and Pleasure a Greater and Better *Friend*. Were you no more than a private *Christian*, yet you were Oblig'd to do all that ever you could for *Jesus Christ*. But when you are a *Christian Magistrate*, how Awkward Sir, will the Office sit upon you, if you can *Tolerate* and allow this most *Unchristian Practice*? And wear a *Dignity* under him, only to *Oppose* him? I say to *Oppose* him: For himself tells you *Mat. 12. 30. He that is not With me is Against me.* And the Magistrate that is a *Swearer*, or a *Conniver* at his Lords Dishonor, does only use the *Advantage* of his Place, to do a great deal more *Mischief* to the *Christian Religion*, than otherwise he could ever have done. And I wonder how any such can ever expect to hear from their Judge at the last, *Come ye Blessed of my Father.*

Thirdly. Will you do nothing Sir, for your dear *Countrey's* Sake? When God has given you so Large a soul in other respects, will you not be so Publick-Spirited, to put in among the Worthy *Patriots* that greatly concern themselves in seeking the *Common Good*? And how can you better Promote it, than in helping to Redress that Cursed Grievance, under which the *Land Mourns*? And to Cure those Corrupt Members that

are such a Shame and *Plague* to the Church? For what an insufferable Absurdity is it Sir, to Toss that Great Name in *Common Oaths*, which we Invoke in our most *Solemn Prayers*? It is not to be endured in a *Christian Community*. It has too much and too long been let alone already; to our great Infamy and just Reproach. And an Odious Brand it would be upon us, were we no more than a *Civilized*, and not a *Christian Nation*. For the very *Heathens* would never Suffer the *Gods* whom they *Worshipped*, to be so Scorned and egregiously *Vilified*. This, this^l, Sir, is one of the Cursed things, for which the Lord hath a *Controversy* with us, and for which *Wrath* is gone out against us. And till it be cast out, O what Expectation, but of Fiery Indignation! We Look for Peace and Good days, but, alas, Sir, what Peace and Good can the *Toleration*, of Ungodliness, and such *Connivance* at Gods High Dishonor *Prostitute*? How can it consist with the Equity and Glory of God, to Espouse the Cause of an *Incorrigible* People, that go on still in their *Trespases*, and even Justifie their Offences; as if they had done nothing *Amiss*, or had no Need to Turn and Alter their Course? Let our Cause be never so *Right*; tis much more Disgraced, than ever its like to be Promoted, by such

as think to Carry it with *Hectoring* and *Swearing* and *Damning*. Yea even our Successes in the World, and the very Blessings of Heaven, will but help the faster to Undo us; as long as we continue in such a posture of *Hostility* against the Blessed Giver.

Indeed Guilt is not then *National*, nor so Crying, when there are strict Laws against it, and Magistrates and Ministers join their *Forces* to Curb and Disgrace it. But O how Rueful is the Prospect, Sir, when they on whom our Eyes are for *Help*, are False or Cold, and shew little Concern, unless it be their *Grievance* and Spight at any thing that looks towards Amendment; And their Forwardness to stand in the *Way* of the Best Intentions, and *Crush* all Endeavours to do us Good? And are rather *Deriders* and Opposers of them, than any Well-willers or *Contributers* to Promote 'em. 'Twas Phineas his *Standing up to Execute Judgment*, that stops the Plague. *Psal.* 106. 30. And such now is our most Hopeful Remedy, Sir, to do *Justice* upon Notorious Offenders, whose Crying Provocations will not Suffer the *Sword* of God's just Indignation to be put up into the *Sheath*. The Merciful God, who is loth to strike, even when Provoked, how

ready is he to hold his hand, upon any occasion for it? O that we may not *Hinder* him of the Opportunity, so to shew his Mercy! May it not stick Sir, at your door, nor mine, that Wars do not *Cease*, and that we are not Blest with Sweet and *Happy* Days.

You complain much of *Perjury*, that some who come before you seem not to Care what Oath they take. And if that be so, Good Sir, do what you can to Remove the Cause; And that is the *Common-Swear- ing*, which makes Consciences so *Cafe- Hardened*, they neither Tremble or Plinch even at the Nefandous Guilt of *For swear- ing*. You seem much Concerned for the Land of your *Nativity*: And I really believe you Desire to see it Prosper. And to this End, Give me leave to tell you Sir, you may Contribute yet a better Assistance, than with your *Purse*: What shall Cost you Less, yet will do us much more Good, yea and further Oblige us, to turn the Sword of *Justice* upon the *Enemies* of our own House, than to draw the Military Sword in open Field, against another Enemy. For what is it that so arms and strengthens them against us, as our own *Enmity* and Rebellion against Heaven? And therefore the more Instrumental you
are

are Sir, to Beat down that, the better *Friend* you must needs be to your Country, and the more *Formidable* to all our *Infernal* and *Anti-Christian* Foes, and follow the *Likeliest* Method to *Suppress* them. For this is to take away the very *Ground* of *Offence*, that provokes the King of all the World, to make them his *Scourge*, to Correct us. And could we but thus Engage him to be *with* us, what need we Fear then who is *against* us?

Fourthly. Will you shew your Esteem and Concern Sir, for *Precious Souls*, made after the *Image* of God, and that are the Price of his *Son's* Blood, yea each of 'em more worth than a *World*? Can you see them sink and perish, and never Care for it? And when madly Running upon their own *Damnation*, will you do nothing to stop and Prevent them? When every Oath is as a *Stab*, and like so many *Seals* annex'd to the Deed of Conveyance, whereby they make themselves over into the *Devils* hands: (God having straightly Forbidden all the World, under Pain of *Damnation*, so to Meddle with his Tremendous *Name*.) And is this Charity and Loving our Neighbour Sincerely and Fervently; When you see them in a way that is so far from Good, Posting *Hellward*, and are for sending them

them Packing, and *Down with 'em*? If not to *Drink* them down, yet to let them *Swear* themselves down, and you Laugh at the Sport, and Applaud the Humor? For ought I know Sir, The very *Laughing* at this Sin, has helped to lay many a Soul in *Hell*. Because they saw how the Humor took, and so many *Oaths*, so many *Jests*; Thus they were Tempted to make their Damnation your *Recreation*. And if this be your Kindness to your Friend, O what's your Cruelty to your worst Enemy! If to *Suffer* Sin upon your Brother, is to *Hate him in your Heart*; And if *S. Jahn Logick* be good with you, that the *Hatred* of your Brother makes you a *Murderer*; Then by so *Kind* a Gentleman as you are Reputed Sir, I think this is fit to be considered. For all the Kindness of your *House*, will never Compensate for such Unmercifulness to *Souls*.

But to be Sharp upon the Swearers Sir, you can never be Kinder to your Friends; Whether they be Guilty of this Wickedness, or not Guilty. If they will be so much their own, and Gods, and their Countrey's *Enemies*, to make themselves so Obnoxious; The best thing then you can do for 'em, is to go as far as ever the *Laws* will allow you, to reclaim 'em. But if they be of the other sort, that *Hate* the prophaneness, you cannot

cannot oblige them more, than to shew your *Concurrence* with them, to save us all from such a Plague, that is the Bloody *Bane* of so many Souls.

Fifthly. Give me leave to Argue with you Sir, a little from the Topick of *Honor*, and to Sollicite you here to put forth your self with vigour, for your *Credit* Sake: That you may not bring your self under a just Suspicion, for no true Friend to Gods Honor; when you partially *Lean* to such, as nothing but Despise and Defy him: For but to *Palliate* the Corruption, betrays a man to be Rotten and Naught; That (if himself do not *Practice* it, yet) he can well enough *away with it*. And when he does not *Abhor the Evil*, a very Great man will make bold to tell him, *There is no Fear of God before his eyes*. Psal. 36, 1, 4. And indeed too much Suspicion do they give, that themselves are of the same *Confederacy* against Heaven, who will sooner side with the Swearer, than with the Reprover.

Therefore though you may know too many Sir, who will be like to turn that to your *Reproach*, which is indeed your greatest Honor; Counting nothing more *Ridiculous*, than to be truly *Conscientious*; Yet I hope you will never make your self really

really *Vile*, to come off the better with such Judges. As *S. Aug.* Confesses, Before he was a Christian, (*Ego ne Vituperarer, Vitiøsior fiebam.*) I was the more Vicious, to save my *Credit*; Least I might be thought the more *Abject*, for being the more *Innocent*. And though some that Name the Name of *Christ* are Ashamed of him before men, and count it a *Diminution* to their Honor, to Stand up for *His*; Yet I hope Sir, you know a better way to Honor: And that nothing in the World does more really *Recommend* and Endear even the Noblest and the Greatest than their serious Piety, in Profoundly *Reverencing* God; and their mighty *Usefulness*, in doing abundance of *Good* to men. For what is true Honor, but the *Rumor* of Actions Pious and Good, rebounding from the Soul to the *Notice* of the World? And the highest *Kings* and *Queens* could never yet pretend to higher Titles, than *Servants* and *Handmaids* of the most *High* God. Who are really the most Honorable, but such as do the *Worthiest* things, and are most *Considerable* for that which is truly Great and Good? The *Blustering* Swearer then that would rudely snatch away Gods Honor, to adorn himself with the *Spoils*, gets only the Honor of a Notorious *Rebel*, and a bold *Thief* and *Usurper*.

And

And such *Scandalous* Sinners do not only Ruine their own Reputation, but also help to bring a *Blot* even upon those with whom they are *Intimate*, to make the less Obnoxious, the worse thought of, for being any way concern'd among them. Here therefore Sir, it is adviseable, to take care of your *own*, as well as of *God's* Honor. Because in taking part with such as are out with him, you Pollute your own name; and by Inclining to such a *Crew*, expose your self to be Reputed no better than *one* of 'em: and nothing like the man whose heart is *Right with God*, and whom the *King of Heaven will Honor*. To put away from you then Sir, the reproach of being *Gods* Enemy, and a *Traitor* to Heaven; I know no better Expedient, than to shew you are Affected to his Honor, by your burning *Zeal* against all the Rude *Violators* of it. Till you are able to declare with the man after his own Heart, *Psal.* 139. 31, 22. *Do not I hate them O Lord that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect Hatred, I count them my Enemies. No Enemies that give me more Disturbance, nor any to whom I have a greater Aversion.* Thus Sir, will you Interests your self in the *Controversy* of your Lords Honor; and never be Ashamed to take his Part, whose

whose very meanest servants may make
 themselves *Glorious*, in being *Zealous* for his
Glory? And how much more may you
 Ennoble your self, by Adorning the Noble
Post you are in, and chusing rather to have
 it said of you, "He acts like a Good *Chri-*
stian, a Worthy *Magistrate*, and a *Brave*
 "man; so to Honor his God, and Oblige
 "his Country; as the *Favourite* of Heaven,
 "and the *Darling* of all Righteous men
 "upon Earth: Than that the *Character* be-
 longing to another sort should be fit for
 "your wearing, to be of such a Strein,
 "That let Church and Souls, and the
 "Glory of God Sink or Swim, he is other-
 "wise taken up, than to Mind any such
 "matters: Let Swearers pour out their
 "Blasphemies, in his very *Face*, he has
 "nothing to say against them, but will
 "sooner partake with them, than, in any
 "other way, *Reflect* upon 'em. He has
 "no Zeal, but for his *Lusts* and his *Sports*:
 "No Revenge, but for his own *Petts* and
 "Quarrels. Such as are most out with
 "God, find the best welcome with him:
 "And the *Godliness* which he should help
 "to *Support*, he *Hates* in his heart. Not
 "a Child of God that he can abide: But
 if you'll shew any *Zeal* for Gods Honor,
 you must never hope for his *Favour*. Alas,
 who can expect he should *Correct* that
 which

which is his own, not only *Practice* but *Pastime*? He will sooner Persecute Gods *Servants*, than Punish his *Blasphemers*. Let him get but any the least Advantage, he will take a *Swinging Vengeance* upon a Zealous Godly man; but struggle hard to help off the most *Flagitious* Offender, if he has but the good Hap, to be one of the *Lewd Knot*. Can you think it a Credit Sir, to have such a Report as this? I have more Charity for you, and cannot entertain so hard a thought of my *Worthy Friend*: God deliver you Sir, from that Honor. May your share be *such Honor as have all God's Saints*. May he Love you and Good men *Praise* you: And then no matter tho the rest do not so well *Approve* of you.

Sixthly. Let me also Plead with you, Sir, the Cause of the *Poor* and beseech you to do this Justice, for their Sakes. If you think it too mean for me to mention your own *Worldly Interest*, concern'd in the *Forfeiture* incurr'd, by your *Wilfull and Willing Omission*, and neglecting to do it: For 'tis like you may most commonly *Escape* here; Though sometime it may be your Hap, to meet with such as shall Fear God, and the Rebukes of their own *Consciences*, more than your *Displeasure*; who

who will venture to go as far as the Law *Authorises* them, to make you *Sensible* of your Default. And then you would deserve to be called somewhat worse than a *Sorry Husband*, for *Incurring* the *Penalty*, rather than you would perform your Duty, and be seen to stand up in the *Vindication*, of God's Glory. But if you are careless of your own Profit Sir, or think that none will dare to touch you there: Yet sure you will not be a Defrauder and Oppressor of the *Poor*, instead of reaching out Kindness to 'em, to withhold their own *Right* from 'em. Instead of *Feeding* the *Hungry*, and *Cloathing* the *Naked*; O do not *Strip* and *Starve* them; to Gratifie the Full and Wealthy, who in being *Swearers*, become the *Poors Debtors*. Help them at least to the share which belongs to 'em. That you may not have only the *Precious Souls*, which perish thro' your Fault, but the *Poor-Bodys* also, Pinch'd and Wrong'd by the same Neglect, to Cry against you.

Seventhly. Be thus Just Sir, for your own *Peace* sake, that you may not go *Self-tormented* with a *Guilty Consciousness* of your own Falsehood to your Lord; Nor lye under his Frowns and the Dread of his Wrath, for *Betraying* your Trust and
Deserting

Deserting the cause which you were set
 up to Promote. I confess your Zeal
 in opposing the Enemies of Gods Glory
 may give you some more Trouble from
 without, than such do find, as more
 Console their own Ease, than his Honor.
 But that trouble, Sir, will be more than
Recompenced, by such a Peace within, as
 passes Understanding. When your Consci-
 ence shall give you good words, and the
 Spirit of God witness with your Spirit, that
 you are the Child of God; Because so hear-
 tily Concerned for the Honor of your Fa-
 ther, which is in Heaven. O Sir, the Light of
 his Countenance, the Tokens of his Love,
 and the Hope of his Glory, will give you
 that Heavenly Satisfaction, which shall
 make you slight all the Clamors and Con-
 tradictions of obnoxious Sinners: and count
 such Peace with God no hard Bargain,
 tho Purchased with the Ill will of some
 men, that were never well affected to the
 Government of Heaven. O what can
 ever give you such a true, Noble, and
 Divine Pleasure, as to be like God himself;
 A Sanctuary to the Distressed, a Curb to
 the Wicked, and a Patron to the Good?
Mens Conscia Recta, this is the Brazen Wall
 against all Assaults of Adverse Fortune
 in the present Life. And this will be
 the Comfort of a Dying Hour; such a

Comfort as *preponderates* all the Pleasures of the Flesh, and the Joys of the World. When you have *done Judgment and Justice*, you may then with Confidence and Boldness in your God, address to the great Protector of such, as his holy Servants does; *Psal. 119. 121. Leave me not to my Oppressors.* O Remember, Sir, your Future Accounts, and what will bring you Peace at the Last, as well as make your Mind Serene, and Easie at Present. And that the Testimony of Conscience may be your Rejoycing, Dare to do your Duty, as an Upright and truly Worshipful Minister of Justice; Who are for Approving yourself to Heaven, and for securing that precious Treasure, and Continual Feast within you, the Blessed Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Eighthly. For Conscience sake, Sir, and in Pursuance of that Truth and Justice, which alone can make you deserve the Character of an Honest Worthy man: Remember the Obligation of your Vow in Baptism; when first you got the Christian Name, as the Faithful Soldier and Servant of Christ, Manfully to Fight the Battles of the Lord, against all the Enemies of his Honor. And also the Obligation of your Oath in the Commission
you

you have receiv'd, as a Magistrate, to do Right unto all, according to the Statutes of the Realm. And may it appear, Sir, that you are a man of Conscience and Integrity, not to be Warpt with Fear or Favour, but set upon the Execution of Right, whoever stands in the way.

Now here I ask you not, Sir, for a Courtesie; but a Debt; What you owe to the Publick, and to your own most Solemn Engagement. You have Sworn, Sir, and must Perform it. And I hope you will never add to the Perjuries, which your self Bewail; nor Falsify your sacred Oath, to Court any ones good liking and Approbation; Nor for Dread of any ones Ill-will or Indignation. But let the Law have its Course, and the Justice which, thereafter, you are to Dispence, let it be done; whoever Scoff or Censure, whoever Grumble or Threaten. Consult not so much your own Carnal Ease, or Ill mens Frowns or Applause, as how you shall Answer it to God, and your own Conscience, in the Discharge of your Place; and in Faithfulness to the Depositum entrusted into your hands. To Betray which were a Wrong, not only to your own Honor and Soul, but to him whom you Represent,

and to All for whom you are bound to do *Justice*, according to your Skill and Power. You are a *Guardian* of the Laws, Sir, to keep them, as far as you can, from being *violated* and *Wrong'd*: And also the *Steward*, to Distribute out to every one that *Portion* which the Laws allot them. Such, you know, Sir, is your weighty *Charge*: and *Faithfulness* here will be your greatest *Praise*.

And in the Execution of *Laws*, which are not all Equal, but greatly *Differ*, according to their Subject-matter, 'Twill be no *Partiality* more than is Praiseworthy, if you think your self concerned and oblig'd, to have respect unto those Laws, in the first place, which set *Entrenchments* and *Fences* to secure the *Glory* of God, and make Provision for the *Exercise* of his holy Religion. For such Laws are only some new Enforcements of the *Divine*; whereby you are *Antecedently* engaged, *truely and Indifferently* to Minister *Justice*, to the Punishment of *Wickedness* and *Vice*; and to the Maintenance of God's true Religion and *Vertue*: And above all things, to Seek his Honor and *Glory*. Studying to preserve the people under your *Inspection*, not only in *Wealth* and *Peace*, but also in *Godliness*.

Lastly,

Lastly, Sir, Look narrowly to the Execution of your Office, especially in the suppression of ungodliness and the Encouragement of Good Manners, for your own *Salvation* Sake: That you may not pull down the Guilt of others *Bloud* upon your own Head, and be charged with the Sins, which you should and might have *Hindred*: Nor yet fall under the Doom of the wicked and *Slotbful* Servant, for neglecting to trade with the *Talents* put into your hands, for the Glory of your *Lord*. You make the Wickedness your *own*, which you bear witness to, *Uncorrected*: And you *Allow*, what you do not *Punish*. O Remember, Sir, what a Judgment the Lord did denounce upon *Eli's* house, at which 'twas said, *Both the ears of him that heard it should Tingle*. 1. Sam. 1. 11. And what was the Reason for it, but *because his Sons made themselves vile, and he Restrained them not*. ver. 13. The Swearers Wickedness, 'tis true, is *their own*, and they make themselves *vile*: But the Guilt of not *Restraining* them as you ought, will lie heavy upon you, and for that you you must look to *Answer*. Tho it be a Negative thing, and but an *Omission*. to be so slack and Remiss; One of the sharpest curses in the Bible is for an *Omission*. *Judg.*

5. 23. *Curse ye Meroz,* said the Angel of the Lord, *Curse ye bitterly the Inhabitants thereof.* And why so severe an Imprecation? Not because they Fought against the Lord: But because they did not *Asspouse* his Cause, to Fight his Battails against his Provoking Enemies. *They came not to the Help of the Lord against the Mighty.* O may you hear and fear so to Tempt the Lord your God, and to Provoke his Jealousie, by your Carelessness of his Glory.

Remember, Good Sir, how short your time is; And how soon the Part you have to Act on the present Stage will be at an end; And that your Eternal State in another World will be Determined, thereafter as you now Acquit your self in this. And having Death, and the great Judgment, and Everlasting Life in your eye, O be not in such Care to curry Favour with Men, as to Ingratiate your self with your Judge, and so to Negotiate for his Honor and Interests; That you may hear from him, at the Finishing of your Course, that Reviving Sentence, which will be more worth than a World: And that after you have been Instrumental to turn many to Righteousness, you may Shine as the Stars in the Kingdom of your Father for ever and ever. Your great Business in this World, Sir,

is not to Please *men*, or to Please your *Flesh*, but to Please and Glorifie *God*, and save your *Soul*. And should you Miscarry and Perish, Alas, what Good would the Good thoughts of a Multitude of the *Damned* Creatures do you? Sure you can ne- think that the Partaking of their Sins, will be any *Valuable Consideration*, for sharing in their Plagues: Nor that Herding or Holding with the Ungodly Crew in their wild *Risques*, and Extravagancies of Living, is the way to be *Numbered with Gods Saints in Glory everlasting*. O Sir, you know who has told us, *That Narrow is the way thither, and few find it*: and those Few that Enter, must *Strive* for it. And pray Sir, what Striving is that, to Swim with the *Stream* of *Flesh* and *Blood*, after the *Course* of the *World*, and to do as the *Most*, and serve *God* only with that which puts us to no *Expence*? To Shrink from all *Trouble* for his Sake and not so much as *venture* to Displease a *Wicked Swearer*? If this will serve the Turn, we may say then, *Wide is the Way to Heaven, who can miss it*? O may you never venter your dear *Immortal Soul*, Sir, in such a *Way*, nor run your *Everlasting Salvation* into these *Desperate Hazards*. But so Concern, and Bestir your self, to Vindicate your *Lord's*

Right's, and to bring him *Glory*; That your Case may look *Hopeful* indeed for Heaven, and you may be like one that shall dwell in his *Holy Hill*, and Inherit the Blessed things *Inconceivable*, which God has prepared for them that Love him.

Now Sir, if there be any *Weight* in what I have here offer'd, Consider it, I beseech you, without *Reflection* on the *Unworthy* hand, from whence it comes. And reject it not under the *Scornful* name of *Preaching*; When 'tis not only the *Parsons*, with their old story; but *King* and *Parliament* who *Quicken* and *Oblige* us now to make the *Quarterly Pay* to our People; to save their *Purses* from the *Penalty*, and their *Souls* from a worse *Punishment*. That we might not be thought to do it only *Pro Forma*, from the *Pulpit*, to fill up the *Hour*; The *Nobles* and *Worthies* who *Constitute* the the *Highest Court* in the Land, have (under the *Kings* most *Excellent Majesty*,) *Interpos'd* their *Authority*; That where our words were *Despised*, *Penalties* might be *Inflicted*. And you Sir, are one of their *Trustees* and *Executors*, to see their *Laws* put in *Force*, and their *Pleasure* fulfill'd. And after such *Provision* made, shall *Blasphemy* still play the *Beast*, and the *Devil* amongst us, and none to stop the
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the Outrage? Shall the Floods of Ungodly men make you so Afraid, that your Contrivance is rather to Hide your self, than to Discharge your Office? And will you be Poor and Timorous in Heaven's Cause, where you should be Bold as a Lion? seeming to own a Guilt, where you are Exercising one of the greatest Virtues? O Sir, call up your Zeal and Courage here, and make some brave Efforts, to shew your self, Worthy of your self. The Sword which God has put into your hands, Dare to turn it against them, who Dare to turn their Tongues against him. And in standing up as one of the Avengers of such Horrid Crimes Raging among us, you will Interpose as one of the Barriers, to keep off the Judgments they are pulling down upon us. While you have no part or Lot with those Betrayers of our Government and Religion, who would make the Good Law, even Good for Nothing.

Yet after all, let me add, Sir, That where other means will serve the turn, It will not argue your Injustice, but rather Commend your Prudence, to supersede this: So that the End of the Law be but Answer'd. For what a wretched sort of Christians are they, (and indeed

deem no better than *Pagans* under the Christian Name, that cannot forbear *Swearing*, but for fear of *Paying*. They are the Wild Beasts of the people, who are to feel the Curb and the Lash, and they to be Hamper'd with such *Laws* of men, that shew nothing of Conscience or Regard to the Holy Law of God. All sincere Christians are a *Law* to themselves, and such towards God in the very Secret of their hearts, that his Fear and Love, and their own Consciences and Principles, are a greater *Restraint*, and a better *Guide* to them, than all the *Commands* and *Ordinances* of Men.

But such as are not otherwise to be dealt with, 'Tis fit the *Law* should have its *Force* upon 'em. For *Execution* is the *Life* of *Laws*. And the present *Law* was not intended only to be *Derided* and *Trampled*, as a *Toothless* thing, that could not *Fasten* upon *Offenders*. Nor to lie by *Dormant* and *Idle*, as if there were no such thing at all, to *Reduce* those to some better *Manners*, whom nothing else would *Restrain*, from *Flying* at *God*, and *Plaguing* their *Neighbours*.

The Great God Bless this, and all Means of every sort, to do us Good. And the Blessing of Heaven be their Portion, who

who shall Prudently and Faithfully concern themselves to help forward a zealous Reformation, particularly of this Provoking Abomination. Amongst which best of all our Benefactors, may you Sir be as Willing as God has made you Able, with good Effect, to concern your self. O Rise up, like one Awakening out of Sleep, and shake off that Sluggishness to Vindicate Gods Glory, which still, (as a heavy Clog,) holds down so many. And go forth like a man of Conscience and Labour, to do things Worthy of your Name and Place. And that you may Proceed on with all Happy Success, and find the Work Prosper in your hands, the Lord be with you, and Guide and Quicken and Enable you for the Office lying upon you; To Accomplish your Warfare, as his Faithful Soldier. That your Lord when he comes, may find you So Doing. And then Blessed shall you be; and in good time, Rest from your Labours: and at last, Receive the Honor without any Burden; and see the Glory of God, without any Clouds upon it; In that Kingdom of his Glory, -where all that faithfully Serv'd him, shall Eternally Rejoyce in him, and Live and Reign most Blessedly with him.

LETTER
I Beg your Pardon Sir, for the long
Trouble, I have now given you; And that
you will be pleas'd to Favour me with
so much of the *Candor* and Kindness I
have ever found with you, as to Accept
this *Pathetick* Epistle, for the Expression
of my Desire to Approve my Self,

Sir,

Yours in all Thankfulness
and Humble Service,

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 13. Line 26. for too Read so. p. 17. l. 1. for wedded r. weeded. p. 19. l. 10. for your r. the. p. 22. l. 1. for tenure r. tenor. p. 23. l. 5. for four r. fowr. p. 27. l. 28. for thee r. them. p. 35. l. 11. r. crooked. p. 36. l. 20. r. that Singularity p. 40. l. 12. r. serves. p. 47. l. 14. dele so. l. 23. dissemble. p. 49. l. 17. r. sake. l. 18. r. sakes. p. 55. l. 17. r. Horrid. p. 23. l. 14. r. Bedlam. p. 27. l. 29. r. Poiskeard, and Poiskeards. p. 29. l. 16. for it r. that. p. 30. l. 23. for stout r. foul. p. 40. l. 7. dele our. p. 48. l. 10. for your r. the. p. 61. l. 18. shew how well.